



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Commerce Housing Team Honored by HUD**

(HELENA) For the fourth consecutive year, members of the Project Based Section 8 Housing Program (PBS8) at the Montana Department of Commerce (DOC) received an "outstanding" evaluation from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). PBS8 was commended by HUD for its leadership in managing 4,000 affordable housing units for Montana's low- and moderate-income families.

The PBS8 housing team - Dave Parker, Tanya Randall, Julie Rice, Becky Shaw, Valerie Short, Sue Mannix and Beth Simonich - contract with HUD to oversee its Montana housing projects. They ensure the projects are managed effectively and according to HUD guidelines, and have done so for five years.

"They do our job better than we do," said Linda Cluck, HUD's oversight monitor for the Rocky Mountain region in Denver. According to Cluck, no states in the HUD region, which includes Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, North and South Dakota, have matched "Montana's consistent excellence in managing properties."

"We're very proud of the Project Based Section 8 team," said DOC Director Anthony J. Preite. "State employees like the PBS8 team recognize that affordable housing pays multiple dividends for Montana families in the form of safer communities and job retention."

Gov. Brian Schweitzer commended the PBS8 team for understanding the far-reaching impact of housing issues on individuals and the local economy. For every dollar spent on quality, affordable housing, Schweitzer said, at least 10 dollars are returned to the Montana economy.

But most importantly, Schweitzer noted, "The good work of Dave Parker, Tanya Randall, Julie Rice, Becky Shaw, Valerie Short, Sue Mannix and Beth Simonich will ensure Montana's families have a safe roof over their heads for years to come."

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